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Camera Saves Cop from Racial Hostility -- Again

By Colin Flaherty

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Another camera saves another cop: This time in Texas, from a black state legislator who in a public hearing accused a cop of racism.

"Last month, Garnet Coleman held a hearing to talk about the controversial arrest of Sandra Bland, the Chicago woman who was arrested and later found dead in a county jail," said the anchor for KHOU news in Houston. "Coleman said he had also been mistreated during a traffic stop in Austin county."

To the list of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Freddie Gray, Sam Dubose and the millions of other martyrs to white crime and violence, Garnet Coleman wants to add one more name: His.

"He talked to me a like a child," Coleman said during the hearing. "He was so rude and nasty. When he found out I was a legislator he became more rude and nasty. What I'm saying is that he treated me like a boy. I want to be very clear about it."

This is familiar territory for Coleman, who gets lots of awards for accusing lots of people of racism.

But the cop's dash camera recorded a different story. One that must interrupt, however briefly, Coleman's installation in the Black Victims Hall of Fame.

The cop's camera recorded the state legislator as he burned by him doing 94 miles per hour — in his personal car with state tags.

On the side of the road, the officer and the black legislator exchanged pleasantries then got down to business: "What's the rush," asked the cop, congenially.

"I'm just trying to get home," Coleman said, alternately saying he was unaware he was doing 94 mph, or that he did not know 94 mph was illegal.

The trooper said he was going to let him off with a warning, which was the same thing another cop in another county did the year before. The trooper reminded the legislator that if he had received tickets instead of warnings, he would have lost his license.

> "Stop speeding in a state car, OK?"
>
> Coleman denied it was a state car.
>
> "You got state plates on it."
>
> "I understand what you are saying, speed got away from me," Coleman said. "But I am not a child."

Then Coleman was on his way. Ticketless.

After the video came out, constituents by the hundreds took to Coleman's Facebook page and other internet outlets to blast him for lying about the cop, his sense of entitlement, and how he should have received a ticket for driving dangerously fast.

All caught on camera.

The Coleman caper came just a few days after a similar incident in the Kansas City suburb of Lenexa. A bystander claimed police were beating a black person For No Reason What So Ever.

The first thing most people saw about this episode came from local activist John Sherman. His video showed two white officers wrestling a black person to the ground and struggling with him.

"When he walked around to the back of the car, I didn't really see him do anything that warranted him being thrown to the ground," Sherman told the local NBC affiliate.

His video drew a firestorm of outrage from around the country.

All based on a lie.

Luckily the truth was caught on the police dash cam and body cam videos. They stopped the man for not wearing a seat belt. They found he was driving with a suspended license and that he had several outstanding warrants for his arrest.

As they tried to place him in handcuffs, he bolted, striking the officers before they took him to the ground.

"I was told I was not allowed to video tape or I was going to jail," said Sherman.

That turned out to be untrue as well. The police just wanted Sherman to keep his distance: It is what cops do when they are in a dangerous situation and strangers -- and goofy activists -- approach.

Cut to TV star Taraji Henson, featured on Empire. She told a black magazine about how her son was the victim of racism at the hands of a big bad white cop.

"My child has been racially profiled," she told *Uptown* magazine in 2014. "He was in Glendale, California and did exactly everything the cops told him to do. Including letting them illegally search his car. It was bogus because they didn't give him the ticket for what he was pulled over for. Then he's at the University of Southern California, that I was going to transfer him to, when police stopped him for having his hands in his pockets. So guess where's he's going, Howard University."

"I'm not paying $50,000 so I can't sleep at night wondering if this is the night my son is getting racially profiled on campus."

Pretty soon, her claim made its way to hundreds of news sites and people from around the world were calling the Glendale Police Department, demanding justice for Taraji's son.

Then came the video: It shows how a white cop stopped a black person for blowing through a flashing yellow light at a cross walk, violating a traffic law. How the cop was polite, almost fatherly. How the 19-year old student offered polite cooperation. How the cop asked if he had any drugs.

> "Just some weed," said Henson's son.
>
> "Anything else?"
>
> "Ritalin."

The cop wrote him up for the "weed," but ignored the Ritalin and the traffic offense, because he did not want the young man to have that blemish on his record.

"And warning: If you have Ritalin on you, and it is not prescribed to you, that is a big violation and I would not want to do that to you," said the cop before letting the star's son go on his merry way -- without even testing him to see if he was under the influence of pot or Ritalin.

Soon after the video came out, Taraji apologized for lying her ass off. No word on how she sleeps knowing her son is driving around under the influence of marijuana and Ritalin. Guess we will have to wait for the sequel.

Over to Oakland: About a year ago a white cop was responding to a call of "burglary in progress" when he came upon an open door in a fire station in a dangerous neighborhood in one of the most dangerous cities in this country or any other.

As he entered the dark fire house, the white officer saw three shadowy shapes and yelled "Hands up, don't move."

They turned out to be a black firefighter with his two children.

Soon after, the firefighter was describing his racist ordeal to local news. How the cop was rude. How the cop almost shot him and terrified his children and how the cop views all "black males as threats."

The video tells a different story: Polite. Professional. And within minutes the officer had had cleared up the situation. No threats of violence. No terror. Except for what the fireman instilled in his two young sons after the fact.

All on video.

About the same time, papers throughout the country proclaimed that a black actress from the movie *Django Unchained* was arrested because police wrongly mistook her for a prostitute when all she was doing was kissing her boyfriend.

She was humiliated. Mistreated.

At least that is what she told the world on Facebook soon after her encounter with a Los Angeles cop: "I remember the countless times my father came frustrated with cops when he came home and had done nothing wrong," said Daniele Watts.

For many across the country the story was familiar enough: A cop was picking on a black person for No Reason What So Ever. And he was mean and hostile and it was all about racism.

The audio tape two days later put the lie to that: The cop was polite. Patient. Soft spoken. Watts was defiant and uncooperative and loud. "Do you know how many times police have been called because I am black," she asked the cop, refusing to produce her ID.

"Thanks for playing the race card," he replied. "I never hear that."

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Watts went on to threaten the cop with her dad, her publicist, her dying stepmom, and her studio.

The officer remained unflappable.

Watts and her boyfriend were eventually charged with lewd conduct after some photos surfaced of some fairly intimate activity taking place in their car, on a busy street, in the middle of the day. They pleaded no contest to disorderly conduct.

As part of the sentence, they were required to write a letter of apology to the officer. In the letter, the couple said they were glad they were arrested because they drew attention to the problem of white racism in America.

Colin Flaherty is the author of the bestselling book Don't Make the Black Kids Angry: The Myth of Black Victimization. You can subscribe to his email updates at WhiteGirlBleedaLot.com

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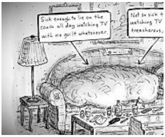

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